
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

I just realized that I had scheduled a meeting at 3:30 this Thursday afternoon (today!) and one of my staff said, “who would schedule a meeting late in the day before a long holiday weekend?” Yep, it was me. I did that. After second thought, I decided this is the season to be jolly, so, I postponed it. It can wait. Ho, ho, heaux.

It seems like it was not that long ago, back in October, that I was complaining about Christmas music, and here it is, with just two shopping days left before Christmas. It's time for last minute shopping, or in some cases, starting the shopping, or in my case, not shopping at all.

As ever, it's been a busy week. At least we've had time for a little fun – we had a retirement party here at central office to send off three people who retired this month – **HR Director Gwen Jones**, **Food Services Director Alethea Bornes**, and **CB Services Administrative Assistant Katherine Abrams**. Each of these ladies played a key role within the agency and they will all be missed. Central office planners pulled out the stops to make sure the send-off party was memorable, with good food, family members of the retirees on hand, and great entertainment presented by OJJ's new girl group, The What. (Watch for **The What** in *The Scoop*.)

Today, Bridge City held its Celebration of Change, and I am pleased to say the BCCY staff put on a fine event, with **Chef Ron Sonnier** and his Culinary Arts students' delectable lunch of grilled boneless chicken breasts covered with crawfish etouffee, served over yellow rice pilaf. **Youth Cody S.** gave an interesting history of Bridge City. Keynote speaker was Orleans Parish Juvenile **Judge Tracy Flemings-Davillier**, whose heartfelt presentation on the word “change” hit home for all of us in OJJ, and certainly for our kids. She stressed that the best weapon is knowledge. The Bridge City Choir, under the direction of choir mistresses **JJs Seletar Gosa** and **Letitia Watts** sang some inspirational Christmas songs, a capella, very impressive. We presented certificates of appreciation to one recent retiree and a number of staff for their extraordinary service to Bridge City. Many thanks to **Acting Director Namon Reid**, who served as master of ceremonies, and his staff, especially **Cassandra Washington** and **Sharonda Smith**.

Okay, I know some of you are probably re-gifting some presents. Admit it, you know what they say – one person's trash is another person's present. Call it a new Christmas recycling program. Going green.

If this is a short week, next week is really going to be brief – holidays on Monday and Friday. So, no What's Up, Doc? next week. The next time you hear from me will be in the brand new year – here comes 2012.

So, from all the central office family to all of you in our regional offices and secure facilities – have a merry and SAFE Christmas, Hannukah, Kwanzaa, and New Year. We'll see you next year! And, as ever, my thanks to all of you, everywhere you serve, for all you do every day of every year to meet the mission.

And, we all know that a significant number of our staff will be away from their families, working on those holidays to care for our youth, and to make sure they have a good holiday away from their families - our thanks to you for all you do.

Sincerely,

“Doc” *Dr. Mary Livers*

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